

# Your annual report 2023/24 is here.



**A joint message from Cllr Rowena Hay, leader of the council and Gareth Edmundson, chief executive, Cheltenham Borough Council**



## Hello!

We are excited to welcome you to our special report. Big changes are happening as Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH) joins with Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC). This means better, more stream-lined services for you, without any disruption.

As we navigate this transition, we want to assure you there will be minimal disruption to your day-to-day interactions and you will continue to report repairs and raise concerns directly in the same way as you do now.

All CBH colleagues will continue using their current email addresses and wear CBH uniforms while driving CBH vans. Although the branding may change in the future, for now, communication will feature a combined logo, as on the top of this document to reflect one team.

In this report, you'll find out about our achievements, future plans, and how we're involving you more in decision-making. We've built new homes, improved and upgraded existing ones, and we continue to support our

community through various local initiatives. In line with our climate pledge, we are committed to making our homes more affordable and eco-friendlier, aiming to be net zero by 2030. It's an exciting future ahead.

Thank you for being a part of CBC. Together, we can make Cheltenham a place everyone is proud to call home.

### *Rowena and Gareth*

**“ we are committed to making our homes more affordable and eco-friendlier. ”**



# Housing services transfer to Cheltenham Borough Council - what do the proposed changes mean for tenants and leaseholders?



**The council is making new plans to improve how housing services are managed. These changes put you at the centre, focusing on what matters most to you.**

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## Here's what you need to know:

### Here's what's changing

**New groups:** There will be a Housing Cabinet Committee and two new panels - one for tenants and one for leaseholders and shared owners. These groups will meet regularly and report directly to the Housing Cabinet Committee. This means your voices will be heard more clearly.

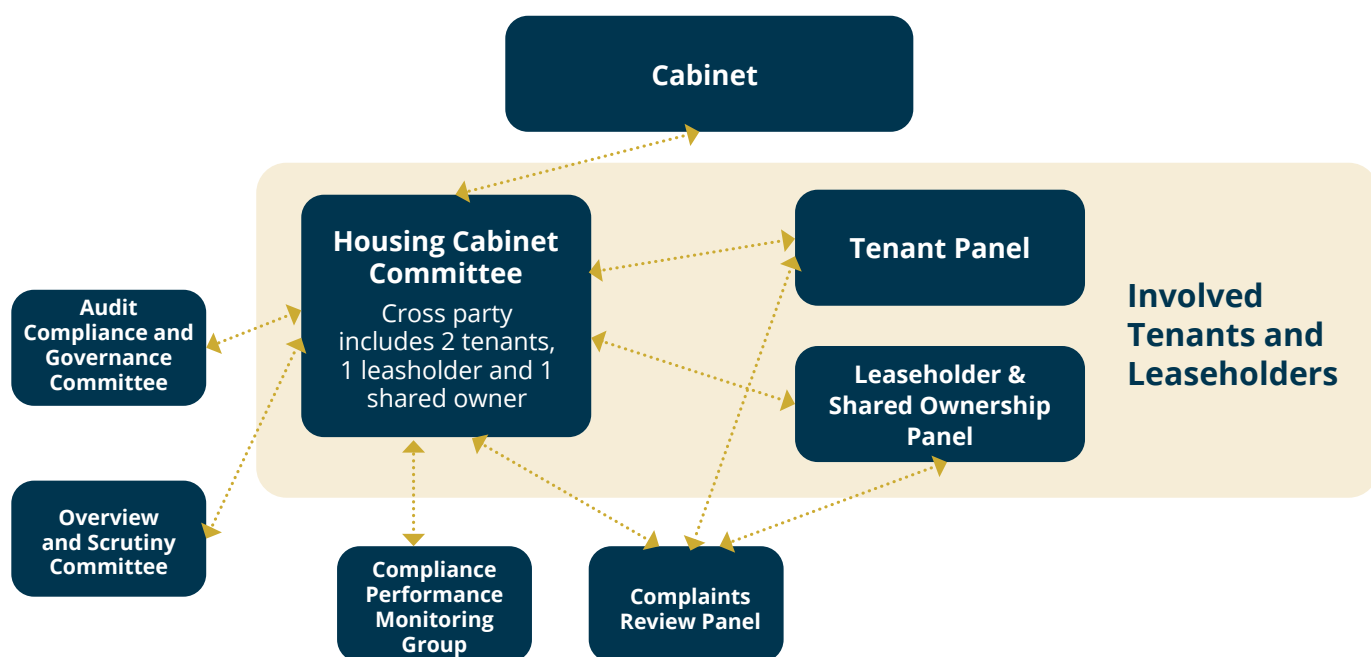
**Better services:** The council wants to improve housing services. This means faster repairs, better communication, and more efficient management. For leaseholders, this includes clearer service charges and better communication about maintenance.

**Your involvement:** Your opinions matter! The new plans will give you more say in decisions about your home.

**Smooth changes:** The council promises that these changes will happen smoothly, without disrupting your current services. Just to advise that, from 1 July 2024, CBH staff transferred to the council and became council employees.

**Support and information:** You will be kept informed and supported throughout this process. There will be regular updates and chances to ask questions or give feedback.

# Housing services transfer to Cheltenham Borough Council - what do the proposed changes mean for tenants and leaseholders?



We are excited about these positive changes and believe they will lead to a better experience for all tenants. Stay tuned for more updates.

If you would like to give your views on the proposals, please email the community investment team at [communityservices@cbh.org](mailto:communityservices@cbh.org).

# More affordable and sustainable homes



We want to help you and your family live in affordable homes that are safe, high quality, and good for the environment.

## Here's how we are doing it:

### Building more homes:



We are supplying **450** new affordable homes over the next five years.

### Quality and safety



All our homes will meet high safety standards and be well-maintained.

### Green homes



Our goal is to make all new homes energy efficient.

## Repairs to Your Home

In 2023/24, we spent £5.9 million on ongoing repairs and maintenance to your homes.

Here's what we achieved:

- **92.3%** of 13,497 emergency, urgent, and responsive repairs were completed on time.
- **94.0%** of repairs were carried out on the first visit.
- **93.4%** satisfaction with the repairs.

We're investing £180 million into building new homes that are affordable and where possible eco-friendly, so everyone can enjoy a cleaner and healthier town.



Some highlights include:

- Improved, or provided new insulation to **230** properties, making them more energy efficient.
- Replaced **212** boilers
- **25** homes now benefit from ground source heat pump heating

We're dedicated to continually improving our homes to give you the best living experience. To support CBC's goal for Cheltenham to be Net Carbon Zero by 2030, we're working on making our homes more energy-efficient. The homes we manage are now among the top for energy efficiency compared to other housing providers.

# More affordable and sustainable homes



Our goal is to make sure everyone has a great place to live. We're investing £180 million into building new homes that are affordable and where possible eco-friendly, helping Cheltenham reach its goal of being net zero by 2030.



## Building more affordable homes

We're excited about the new developments in Cheltenham. Projects like the Golden Valley Development will create many new homes.

## Making homes sustainable

Where possible our goal is to make new homes energy efficient. On some of our recent builds we have included solar panels, air source heat pumps and high levels of insulation. This is good for the environment and helps families save on energy bills.

## Creating strong, healthy communities

We aim to build not just houses, but strong, healthy, and inclusive communities. Our projects focus on safety, quality, and making sure everyone has a nice place to live.

## Our Achievements in 2023/24

We have a pipeline of **340** homes and our goal is to deliver **450** affordable homes within the next 5 years.



Made significant progress in promoting CBC's climate change ambitions.



Continued to support CBC to ensure a strong supply pipeline from the Golden Valley Development.



Provided **49** affordable homes.



Provided **3** homes for shared ownership.



Acquired **9** homes as part of our acquisition program.

Added **21** new homes through the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF), which helps us buy and fix up houses so more families can have a safe and comfortable place to live.



We're committed to building a better future for everyone in Cheltenham. Thank you for being a part of our community.

# Stronger and more resilient communities



We want to make our communities strong, healthy, and connected. By working together with our customers and local partners, our ambition is to bring people closer, reduce loneliness, and help everyone who needs support. We will do this through community projects and shared goals.

## Our Goals:



### Support strong communities:

Work together to make our neighbourhoods safe and happy.



### Help with cost of living:

Provide support and create opportunities for everyone to live comfortably.



### Create opportunities from new developments:

Make sure our communities benefit from new projects like the Golden Valley development.

## Helping you manage money and benefits

Our benefits and money advice team is here to help you manage your money and get the benefits you need. Our service is free and confidential. We can help you calculate your benefits and make a budget.

### In 2023/24, we made a big difference:

- We created £4,413,000 in social value.
- Our Help2 program provided £12,911 for customers in crisis to buy important items like white goods, furniture, or carpets.
- We helped customers claim £1.1 million in benefits.
- We cleared £45,000 of arrears.
- We obtained more than £24,000 from the Big Difference Trust to help with water bills.
- We secured more than £15,000 in charitable grants.
- We provided 537 customers with benefit and money advice.

### One happy customer said:

"We can't thank you enough, honestly, you have been absolutely amazing and are so kind. You have changed our life during the most difficult time. I am so grateful for everything you have done".

# Stronger and more resilient communities



## Service success

- We are still an Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Training Centre provider.
- We created more training and workshop sessions, like Cost of Living workshops, smart shopping, and budgeting, delivered at schools, community centres, and other local spots.
- We introduced a mobile service to reach more people across Cheltenham.
- We improved our marketing to let more people know about our services.
- We were shortlisted for a UK Housing Award for Resident Employment and Training.
- We secured funding for new national schemes like Multiply, Digital Hubs/DAISI, and the Levelling Up Together grant.



## Performance highlights:



**68**  
people were supported into work.



We created  
**£1,965,505**  
in social value (HACT).

**110**



people entered training, with all reporting improved skills.

**162**



combined training and employment outcomes.



**100%**

of users reported high satisfaction (8+/10).

## Value for money

We secured £14.5k worth of data cards from Vodafone to help customers tackle digital exclusion. We also worked with partners to share resources and support people in achieving their goals.

# Stronger and more resilient communities



## Plans to improve in the future

### Training

We will keep offering training support to our residents and communities. This includes workshops, online courses, and training sessions to help increase skills and knowledge.

### Employment

We will continue to offer employment support and projects to help people find jobs. We will work with partners to support this plan.

### Mobile offer

We will expand our mobile service to deliver training and employment workshops to communities and partners.

### Youth offer

We will keep working with schools and colleges to support young people into employment and reduce the number of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

### Housing services wrap-around approach

We will work to provide a wrap-around service, combining income, benefits and money advice, and training and employment support to better serve our community.

### Community involvement

We aim to create strong, happy communities where everyone thrives by working with local partners to support you and your family.



One resident said:

“I was living horrendously before the ASB team started to support me, and now I’m living 100x better.”

**This shows how we make a real difference in people’s lives.**



# Stronger and more resilient communities



This year, we helped **435** people and families stay in their homes or find new ones, preventing homelessness. We also moved many from supported housing to their own homes to live independently. Through our efforts, we found homes for more people, keeping them off the streets.

We regularly visit homes to check on our customers, giving advice and support. This year, we helped several families with hoarding issues and assisted many people in downsizing to smaller homes, freeing up space for larger families.



## Achievements



We have had an exciting year with many fun and helpful projects for our community – highlights include!

- The Moors Kids Club engaged up to 25 young people.
- Football sessions by Cheltenham Town FC.
- “Move More” Mini Movers and holiday sessions.
- Bulb planting and playpark redevelopment at St Peters Square.
- Music and art outreach programme and holiday activities.
- Distributed essentials like bedding and clothing.

### As well as...

#### Health and wellbeing

CBH supported a men's group, secured £20,000 for a health and wellbeing project, connected community gardening projects, collaborated with cultural

organisations, and assisted resettled families through Gloucestershire Action For Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

#### Digital and innovation

We conducted coding clubs, offered free afterschool sessions, partnered for STEM activities, organised community events, provided portal training, and offered free tickets to the Cheltenham Science Festival.

#### Older adults/supported living schemes

Monthly coffee mornings, arts and crafts sessions, fitness and social activities, and consultations for communal space regeneration were offered. Resident groups at Popes Close and Lynworth Court received support.

#### Intensive community engagement, St Pauls

The “Love Your Street” project, participation in the St Pauls (Scanning, Analysis, Response,

Assessment) plan, afterschool growing and cooking clubs, monthly litter picks, and re-establishing a community action group were key initiatives.

#### Tenant engagement

CBH refreshed the Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP), completed reviews, trained TSIP members, developed a new engagement strategy, and involved tenants in service reviews and complaint panels.

These achievements reflect our commitment to encouraging a vibrant, supportive community.

#### Awards

**Winner:** NCLB Awards for The Moors Kids Club.

**Winner:** Rising Star Volunteer of Year for our young helper, Alfie.

**Winner:** Dunelm Shining Star Award for Alexis Turner nominated by a community member from the ‘Moors’.

# Stronger and more resilient communities



## Our achievements:



1,870

partner hours delivered



11,185

engagements in activities



330

customers involved in shaping our services

### External funding secured by the team:

£26,056 - CBC health and wellbeing fund  
£3016 - GCC Build Back Better

### In addition to this, we were a named partner on the following bids:

£5000 - PCC bid for youth provision in St Pauls  
£1200 - National Gardening Scheme- town wide  
£7000 - Art Shape youth provision in St Pauls  
£10,000 - Awards for all for Cheltenham is Growing  
£1500 - NGS for Cheltenham is Growing  
£1500 - CBC Health and wellbeing fund

### Future plans:

#### Merging panels and expanding engagement:

Our existing TSIP panel will combine with the new tenant panel which sits under CBC. Our tenant engagement will also include a Leaseholder forum, a platform for young people's voices, and a platform for older adults' voices.

#### Developing St Pauls community hub:

We will enhance the services and activities offered at the St Pauls community hub.

#### Increasing cyber opportunities:

By collaborating with the Golden Valley Development project, we aim to boost cyber opportunities in our communities and inspire people to pursue careers in cybersecurity.



### Exploring new funding:

As our services move back into CBC, we will look for new funding opportunities to support our initiatives.

### Empowering tenants:

We will focus on empowering tenants to establish their own constituted groups, enabling them to create sustainable changes in our communities.

### Expanding independent living schemes:

We plan to enhance our offerings in independent living schemes and attract older adults from nearby areas to benefit from these services.

### Improving community services:

We will partner with various organisations to better serve our communities, including tenants with disabilities, Black, Asian, and minoritized people, LGBTQ+ individuals, and residents in emergency and temporary accommodation.

Thank you for being part of our community and making it vibrant and strong!

## Case study:

The Enrich Project, funded by the NHS, addresses the UK health crisis by offering a holistic program for lower-income adults, including cooking, nutrition, and physical activities like Qigong and forest bathing. Jim, a participant with long-term mental health issues, reported improved confidence, routine, and mental health after just three months in the programme.

# Change to realise opportunities



**We believe in change. Change helps us grow, improve, and provide better services to you, our valued tenants. Our goal is to face challenges head-on, while continuing to deliver top-quality service and high satisfaction. To do this, we need to evolve as a business.**



## Here are some ways we are working to unlock new opportunities:

### Embracing technology

We are using technology to make our services faster, easier, and better for you. This includes making more customer processes digital, increasing online transactions, and extending mobile technology for better service outside the office and connected communities through digital projects.

### Generating income

We are finding new ways to bring in money, like getting more funding from the government and discovering new business opportunities. This helps us provide more services and support to our community.

We secured funding for new national schemes like Multiply, Digital Hubs/Digital Accessibility, Inclusion, Support and Innovation (DAISI), and government grants.

### Going green

We are committed to making Cheltenham carbon net zero. This means reducing our carbon emissions, using less energy, and promoting sustainable transport. We are also working towards having a carbon net zero business by 2030.

### Improving services

We are always looking to improve the customer journey. By developing better systems, streamlining processes, and using data smartly, we can offer high-quality services that meet your needs. We want to make our services more accessible digitally while still being available face-to-face and by phone.

### Supporting our community

We aim to support Cheltenham by getting funds to build new homes and improve existing

ones. We also work with developers to create opportunities for generating income, which can then be used for social purposes.

### Reducing environmental impact

We are reducing our business's impact on the environment by cutting down energy use, promoting green transport, and monitoring our carbon footprint.

### Working with partners

We partner with various groups to lobby the government for more support and funding. This helps us to better serve our communities, especially those facing tough challenges.

By making these changes, we aim to create a better, more sustainable future for everyone in Cheltenham.

# Change to realise opportunities



## Listening and acting

**We care about your opinions. Every three months, we ask tenants to share their thoughts through phone surveys. This helps us know what we're doing well and what needs improvement. Our leaders look at the survey results and share them with our Board each year. Moving forward, this will be reported to the newly formed housing committee. If tenants are unhappy with something, we ask if we can follow up and explain how to make a complaint.**

Complaints are important to us. We have a Complaints Policy to handle them fairly. You can share your thoughts, compliments, and complaints through the Tenant Handbook, CBH website, and CBH News. We update you on changes we make based on your feedback through CBH News and social media.

Our complaints process is easy to understand. Our Complaints Policy was updated in April 2024 to meet the latest standards. It ensures that the process is fair and clear. Our complaints officer works closely with tenants to keep them informed.

**“ We care about your opinions**

**”**

# Change to realise opportunities



We work hard to support our customers and their families.

Your feedback helps us improve.

## Survey Results from 2023/4


 **82%**  
find us easy to deal with

 **78%**  
think we help the neighbourhood

 **80%**  
are satisfied with repairs and maintenance

 **70%**  
feel heard by us

 **204**  
formal complaints received

 **81%**  
feel safe in their home

 **66%**  
are happy with how we handle anti-social behaviour

 **100%**  
of complaints handled on time


 **80%**  
are happy with home maintenance

 **46,993**  
calls answered

 **80%**  
overall satisfaction

 **94%**  
of calls answered within 60 seconds

 **83%**  
feel informed by us

 **43%**  
satisfied with how complaints are handled

Our focus is you, our valued customers. Your opinions matter, and we use surveys and feedback groups to understand your needs. This helps us involve you in decision-making.

# Our annual tenant report update from TSIP and the Chair



## Message from Edwin Trevena, TSIP Chairman

"This year has been fantastic for Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP) and tenant engagement. In March, we welcomed new members who joined our experienced team, creating a united and motivated group.

"Our group completed training with Tpas, the tenant engagement experts, did two full reviews of CBH services, and took part in complaints and policy reviews. We're staying up-to-date with new regulations and helping shape housing services to meet new standards.

"We've also worked with teams to ensure our guidelines meet these changes.

"This report highlights our achievements and plans for future tenant engagement, showing our commitment to putting tenants first.

"We had a busy year, learning new ideas from Tpas and reviewing services. We talked with service leads, colleagues, and communities to find ways to improve. The increase in data has helped us a lot, allowing us to send out large tenant surveys easily.

**"I'm excited to see what we can achieve next year as we join with CBC."**

A few words from Timothy Lansdown, new TSIP member

"I've found TSIP to be a great place to get involved in the running of properties. We tackle real-life problems and work with CBH to see if long-standing processes can be improved."

### Consultation:

- Consumer standards improvement plan (CSIP)
- Input into new governance arrangements under CBC
- Reflection on the Campbell Tickell report
- Complaints handling code
- Single equality scheme

### Scrutiny:

- ASB
- Complaints
- How can CBH tackle the issue of non-reporting

# Our annual tenant report update from TSIP and the Chair



## Training

All TSIP members took a full day training session with TPAS, learning about tenant scrutiny and its importance in improving standards.

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## Project update

We spoke with members of the team about the windows and doors project. Despite challenges, the project saw 5250 windows and 3000 fire doors installed, mostly on budget.

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## Tenant consultation

TSIP was engaged in discussions throughout the transition as CBH moved services back in house to CBC and helped choose an independent company for the tenant consultation.

## Scrutiny review: cleanliness and waste management

From September to November 2023, TSIP reviewed waste management and cleanliness in our properties. We found best practices and suggested improvements for communication and facilities.

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## Complaints panels

TSIP members joined five Level 2 complaint panels to ensure fair dispute resolution. This helps us improve the complaints process with valuable tenant input.

# How rent is spent

Making sure we offer great service without unnecessary expense is very important to us. We want to give you value for your money. We carefully handle our spending to keep our essential services strong and ensure positive results for you, our customers.

Every year your rent is paid into a pot of money called the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The income generated in this account enables us to:



Deliver enhanced services



Maintain and improve your home



Provide more affordable homes



During 2023/24 the HRA spent a total of **£24.6m** and every £1 of income received was distributed across the service areas in the following way:



**23p**



improving homes



**24p**



maintain and repairing homes



**12p**



providing new homes



**15p**



providing business support services



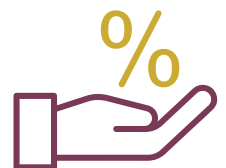
**14p**



maintaining neighbourhoods, involving residents and delivering services



**12p**



interest on amounts borrowed